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Material on the life histories of individual Alorese and the results of personality tests given to these individuals will be found in category 116, pp. 193-547, 552-553, 602, 609-623, 625, 631, 634, 637-640.

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of sisters with whom he was accused of improper relations at least five years before, and prior to the women's marriages. Nothing of the affair had been suspected until both women had difficulty in childbirth and their husbands beat confessions out of them.

Since a child scarcely ever results from occasional lapses from chastity, both men and women feel free in that respect as long as they are careful not to be caught. When I explained to Fantan the Interpreter that we had different ideas in our culture, his comment was, "Oh, that's too bad," which was a nice index of the amount of latitude the Atimelangers' ideas of conception give them in respect to their ideas of sex morality. The very obvious advantage of such ideas of conception makes Atimelangers, in discussing the subject, extremely unwilling to abandon them, even though they grant that sows will conceive after a single contact with a male. They are quick to add, however, that three or four days in the pen with a male produces a larger litter. It is a nice example of how reluctant people can be to abandon formulations justifying congenial behavior and consistent with elaborated attitudes.

It is interesting that, as in many other cultures, illegitimate children seldom, if ever, occur. In the Five Villages there was only one illegitimate child, the offspring of Matingma the Crazy Woman. Since Matingma's craziness was phrased mostly in terms of sex, her aberrant and almost unique status deserves mention here. Matingma was considered in her youth a perfectly normal person. She married a man in the Kalaisi area with whom she did not get along, so she returned to live with her father. On her return several young men wished to buy her. Time after time a preliminary payment was made, but each time the man involved requested the return of her bride-price because she was having affairs with other men. Her father assumed a bland attitude toward these complaints, answering, "Your wife is still here. Go sleep with her if you wish. I won't be angry." After about four such episodes no further attempt to purchase her was made.

During the first few years after her return, and at a time when she was not in permanent residence with any one man, she bore a child. In view of the local theory of conception, she was undoubtedly considered to have been far more loose morally than she may actually have been. In the course of time she came to be known as the "crazy woman." Her illegitimate child and her profligacy were adduced as evidence. It will be recalled that the fact that she took her child to the fields with her and permitted it to sleep on the ground was another bit of evidence. At the time of this investigation Matingma was at least in her late thirties and had become a sort of village prostitute. "She steals

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159 from people's gardens. Men from whose gardens she has stolen sleep
836 with her as payment for the food she has taken. Very many older men
[848] sleep with her, but young men are not brave enough."

Reasons for the lack of illegitimate children are not hard to find. If
848 Ashley-Montague's* suggestions are correct, it is quite possible that fertility is low at the period when young girls are indulging in premarital sexual activities. Further, mechanical abortions are practiced, and a
847 pregnant girl would probably attempt to avoid difficulties by a deliberate and early miscarriage. Although the society does not approve, married women, particularly older ones, make no very great secret of the fact that they avoid unwanted children by very vigorous labor or by even more deliberate attempts, like jumping repeatedly from a tree or rock or by jolting themselves in a squatting position against a stone. It is felt that these practices are most efficacious in the first two or three months, when the child is still in liquid form. Probably the accuracy of
[843] ideas on fetal development can be attributed in part to the practice of abortions.

842 There are also "medicines" that are supposed to reduce the menstrual flow, delay conception, and actually produce barrenness. In addition, women class themselves as "long conceivers" (*pol lobu*) and "short conceivers" (*pol bui*). To be a long conceiver is considered an advantage. When a young man's wife fails to conceive after a year or two, he frequently becomes suspicious of her and may accuse her of having taken a medicine to cause barrenness. "A man will then beat his wife, and if she has taken such a medicine, she has to ask some older woman for the antidote."

842 "Medicine" for any of the three purposes mentioned above seems
278 to belong more to the realm of magic than to that of effective pharmacology. Most procedures consist of eating certain leaves, like those of a sort of maidenhair fern, in a prescribed fashion over a given number of days. Another way of producing barrenness is to drink the dirty water in which one has washed a gong. This is again a reflection of the relationship, hostile in character, between sex and wealth. Men are never considered to be sterile, and birth control measures are never used by them.

842 At this point I am less concerned with establishing the possible but improbable efficacy of certain leaves and procedures in reducing menstruation and in delaying or preventing conception than I am in indicating a series of attitudes. The sum of what I have said so far seems to

* M. F. Ashley-Montague, *Coming into Being among the Australian Aborigines* (New York: Dutton, 1937), pp. 142ff.

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a few people who ignore the theory and plant extra corn fields or even occasional rice fields during "rat years." Yet the social fiction seems almost a rationalization of basic food attitudes in the individual. It appears to be almost an expression of infantile deprivation and helplessness. However, it is only with the utmost caution that I would suggest in any particular case that individual psychology is the direct source of an institutionalized form.

Theft and fear of theft are ramified phenomena whose implications extend beyond their application to food, but the most common type of theft is from gardens. This may be explained on two bases: one is the early theft habits of foraging play groups of boys; the other is that food is one of the few types of property which cannot be absolutely identified and which can be used without much fear of detection. For these reasons, perhaps, one sees the use of curses against theft erected most frequently in fields. These curses, made by specialists, are bamboo poles into whose cleft top are inserted the necessary combinations of magical objects. They are erected in fields where theft has occurred or where the owner fears such an occurrence. Once there, they are supposed to work automatically. A thief would develop leprosy or some other fatal or debilitating illness, and even the owner should call the specialist to remove the curse before harvesting the field. Although these curses are widely used, they seem actually to engender very little fear among most people. Certainly they in no way effectively stop pilfering. Many people are more realistic in the face of depredations and keep armed guard on their fields. A thief caught in the act runs the risk not only of having to pay a fine but also of being shot.

Another important food attitude is shown by the limited range of generosity in distributing it. An occasional guest is fed, but soon enough anyone who is obviously scrounging is no longer asked to eat. In case a family runs short of corn or rice it has to buy or borrow from those who may have a surplus. But if food is borrowed, it is at rates of interest running as high as one hundred percent. This holds even between brothers. Thus Funemi wanted a hundred-ear corn bundle. He got it from his brother but had to repay it at harvest time with two corn bundles of the same size. Even feasts, which at first blush appear to be generous food distributions, are far from lavish in actuality. Each female guest brings to the feast a contribution of food. Everything brought by guests is pooled with the hosts' contributions and then redistributed so that women may carry back home but little more than they brought in the first place. Of course they do receive meat in addition, but most often the meat consists of only three or four cubes of boiled pork about two inches square. However, the quantities displayed are considerable and the hosts derive satisfaction therefrom.

I have been concerned with describing a series of childhood experiences and a series of institutionalized adult food attitudes. The experiences of individual children with respect to hunger gratifications and disciplines vary greatly; it is to be expected, therefore, that in adults these cultural attitudes toward food will vary in "the depth or shallowness of meaning in the individual's total economy." Mungma began his autobiography with early memories of a period of hunger, whereas Tikopaia, who was the same age and of the same village, began the story of her childhood with quarrels between herself and other children.

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One man is conscientious and regular in making food sacrifices to his familiar spirits; another neglects them until illness indicates that he has angered his ancestors. I have been concerned not with an attempt to uniformize personality among Atimelangers but with an attempt to show how individual childhood experiences with respect to hunger find consistent outlets in institutionalized fields which reinforce early socialization and which persons may then invest with greater or lesser emotional energy.

Also, one must be careful not to use such neat an exclusive causal sequence. I do not believe that the childhood food experiences of the Atimelangers have given rise to the system of sacrifice. They have merely reinforced and made significant to many individuals that widespread Indonesian custom. I would suggest, however, that it would be very difficult to eradicate sacrifice in Alor so long as its individual symbolic value can be so high. For example, a child who has learned that the gratification of hunger is a precarious and uncertain thing may well become an adult who shows ceremonial attitudes toward the waste of food, especially if he sees adults who already reveal those attitudes. He has learned as a child that food is hard to get, that it can be stolen, and he has had no positive training in being generous with it. In fact, the whole pattern of discipline has been weighted on the restrictive rather than permissive side. All these individual experiences are reinforced by being reflected in adult behaviors (absorptive disciplines) and thereby become stable complexes that may have little relation to the reality of subsistence economy.

To avoid the possibility of simplistic interpretations, it must be stressed again that no single tension like hunger and the habits associated with its gratification will explain either the totality of the culture or the dominant and stressed personality traits of its bearers. It will be only by examining the whole variety of such individual life experiences and searching for the formalized and unformalized cultural correlates that any progress will be made, not only in defining more sharply the interaction of personality and culture, but also in elucidating the stability of attitudes and value systems. Institutions which may be invested with high emotional value because of patterns in child training are not the ones which can be lightly legislated out of existence. To eliminate such institutions without altering standardized methods of education, may well produce serious social and personal disharmonies. The implications of these statements, if true, cannot be ignored by colonial administrators and legislators. It is possible that when we understand better our own culture we shall have learned that basic social changes of a non-disruptive nature must be anticipated in the early and intimate conditioning of children.

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